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FIGHTING INSECTS WHICH ATTACK MAN, POULTRY
AND LIVESTOCK.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by F. C. Bishopp, Bureau of Entomology, delivered through WRC and 39 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Monday, April 20, 1931.

The warm spring sunshine brings out the downy pussy willow, the velvety grass, the green leaves, the dainty spring flowers, and the durned bugs.

Mosquitoes, sand flies, fleas, houseflies, and ticks come forth with the flowers -- the thorns among the roses. Even though we could, we wouldn't want to hold back the spring and do without the summer to avoid the bugs, so it's up to us to meet the enemy -- informed and fighting.

Today I'm going to give you a few of the facts about some of the more important insects which cause my radio friends discomfort or perhaps infect them with disease, and which attack livestock and poultry.

I guess we're all concerned about our chicks as much as anything these spring days. Isn't it a shame to see the little fellows get droopy and die from lice and mites when these pests are so easily controlled? Even egg production of your hens is cut and setting hens disturbed or broken up by these "varmints." Sodium fluoride (s-e-d-i-u-m f-l-u-o-r-i-d-e) is our standard remedy for lice. It's remarkable that so little of this powder is sufficient to clean out an infestation completely when used either as a dust or dip. I'd advise you to dust your setting hens before the chicks hatch. For mites, bed bugs and fowl ticks clean out the nests and paint the boxes, roosts and roost supports with carbolineum (c-a-r-b-o-l-i-n-e-u-m) or creosote oil. Do this in the morning, and take care not to get any of the material on the hens or eggs. One treatment will clean out the mites. The methods of fighting these pests are given in detail in Farmers' Bulletin No. 801-F.

The appearance of the housefly on the table makes us hunt up the fly swatter, but let's do more than kill that fly. Let's find where he came from and get his brothers and sisters and the rest of the family before they hatch. I don't need to tell you about the filthy habits of this pesky fly. He's just too dirty to talk about in polite society. He carries germs of typhoid, dysentery and other diseases to our milk and other food. He annoys our cattle and horses and may infect them with certain worms. Clean up all manure and decaying vegetable matter and keep it clean. Scatter such material thinly on the fields. You should look after the cleaning of chicken houses, barns, feed boxes and empty silos. Properly baited conical traps catch great numbers of flies, and the use of killing fly sprays wherever flies congregate is a great help. Don't forget to fix up that screen door, and mend that torn window screen for the good wife this evening, while she writes for our Farmers' Bulletin on the housefly (Farmers' Bulletin No. 1408-F). If your boy wants to make up a dandy fly trap, at a cost of eighty cents, have him write for our bulletin on Fly Traps and Their Operation (Farmers' Bulletin No. 734-F).

(over)

While we are on the subject of flies I want to tell you about a couple of cousins of the housefly. You know, when I was a boy I used to fuss about the way the housefly would bite when it was about to rain. Well, that wasn't the housefly at all, but the stable fly. Oh, how that rascal can bite! Just think of having a dozen or a hundred biting you at one time, like they do old Bess, and old Dobbin. Have some pity on these old friends and clean up your feed pen and old straw stack bases, along with the manure, for that is where these pests breed. Farmers' Bulletin No. 1097-F will give you more information on the stable fly. The horn fly, or as some of us call it, the "Third Party Fly," specializes on cattle. Though rather small, it is a good biter too, and stays on the cattle continually except for a few moments when it leaves to lay its salmon colored eggs on fresh cow droppings. Scatter the manure, and spray the cattle lightly with a good killing fly spray, such as kerosene extract of pyrethrum.

There are a lot of other different kinds of flies in which some of you may be interested. The horse flies and deer flies breed in swampy places and along streams. The eggs are laid on leaves or stems of plants along the sloughs and the young live in the mud or gravel. This makes them hard to reach and the flies are such vicious blood suckers that they are not easily repelled with sprays. Drainage is the only sure way of stopping their breeding. Darkened stables, and the use of heavy fly nets gives some relief.

Horse bots and cattle grubs or warbles are caused by flies too. These insects cause tremendous losses, but they should be fought mainly in the winter and early spring while in the grub or bot stage, as it is not practicable to attempt to destroy the fly stage. The horse bots are controlled by giving carbon disulphide to the horses in capsules in the winter and the cattle grubs by extracting the grubs from the backs of the animals in the winter and spring, this prevents the appearance of the heel flies which cause the cattle to run wildly into water or shade to escape them. Farmers' Bulletin No. 1596-F deals with the cattle grubs.

Perhaps most of you know that mosquitoes breed in water. But many of you probably think that they also breed in dense vegetation or in damp soil. This is not the case. If water is not allowed to stand in pools and containers mosquitoes will not breed. Drainage of swampy places and pools, and clearing the banks of streams and disposing of cans and all other temporary water containers will prevent mosquito breeding. Where drainage is impractical oiling the surface of pools, cisterns and cesspools will kill the mosquito wrigglers. Many of our mosquito troubles are from local sources and can be solved with little work and expense. On the coast the salt marsh mosquitoes are a more serious problem, and extensive drainage and oiling operations requiring concerted effort are necessary. We shall be glad to send those interested a copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 1570-F, "Remedies and Preventives for Mosquitoes."

Fleas, what joyous memories that word brings to many of us! Think how they bother you and have pity on poor old Fido. Start early and keep Fido free by dusting him every week or two with fresh pyrethrum powder, or better still, with derris powder. A teaspoonful of the derris powder will kill every flea on a big dog. Spray the sleeping places of the dog lightly with creosote

oil if fleas are noticed in numbers around the premises. Fleas sometimes breed in litter in hog pens too, and in such cases the sheds should be cleaned of litter and sprayed with creosote oil.

Ticks are not insects, but I want to mention them because of the danger of your contracting rocky mountain spotted fever, or rabbit disease from their bites. Clearing out undergrowth, destroying the ticks on dogs and other domestic animals before they become engorged, and taking care not to let the ticks get attached or at least to remain attached long, are some of our suggestions to you.

I don't want to make you mad right at the close of this talk, so I'll say nothing about the pesky chigger -- anyway you won't need to worry about him for a month or two yet.
